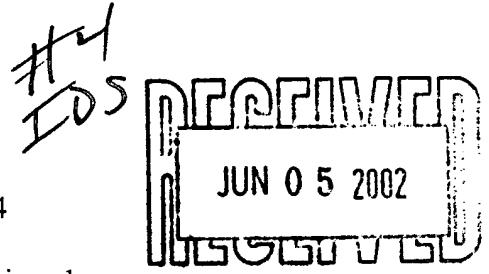


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MAY 31 2002  
SC98  
U.S. PATENT & TRADEMARK OFFICE  
Docket No.: 50395-128

PATENT

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

re Application of :  
Takatoshi KATO, et al. :  
Serial No.: 10/026,445 : Group Art Unit: 2874  
Filed: December 27, 2001 : Examiner: not yet assigned  
:  
For: OPTICAL FIBER SPLICING METHOD AND OPTICAL TRANSMISSION LINE



Commissioner for Patents  
Washington, DC 20231

Dear Sir:

In accordance with the provisions of 37 C.F.R. 1.56, 1.97 and 1.98, the attention of the Patent and Trademark Office is hereby directed to the references listed on the attached form PTO-1449. It is respectfully requested that the references be expressly considered during the prosecution of this application, and that the references be made of record therein and appear among the "References Cited" on any patent to issue therefrom.

This Information Disclosure Statement is being filed within three months of the U.S. filing date OR before the mailing date of a first Office Action on the merits. No certification or fee is required.

Each non-English language reference was cited in a corresponding foreign application search report or office action and its relevance discussed therein. A copy of the foreign search report or office action, together with an English language version thereof, is attached for the Examiner's information.

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Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 500417 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

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